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done most of the fighting for them. This is an arrangement that seems to suit everybody, for as the Chinese put it, "The Lo-los are stupid men who are not afraid of dying."

The T'u-ssŭ keeps up a small standing army, and every one of his men that I saw was armed with a breech-loader. He also appears to recognise the importance of discipline, for a man goes in front of his troops with a red placard on which is written the T'ung-an-chou "Army Act."

For not obeying bugle calls—To be beheaded.

For being drunk and fighting—To be put in the stocks.

For losing arms or ammunition—To be beheaded.

For destroying the property of civilians—To be beheaded.

For being absent at night—To be put in the stocks.

For gambling—To be put in the stocks.

For extorting money by threats—To be put in the stocks.

For taking a wrong rifle—To be put in the stocks.

For buying things and refusing to pay—To be put in the stocks.

We slept the night at Li-chou which in spite of its name is not an official town of the *chou* class, though it is a prosperous commercial place.

The following day, the 22nd February, we had another level march to the town of Lu-ku which is built where the two sources of the An-ning Ho meet, one coming down from Mien-ning Hsien, and the other and smaller branch from the Hsiao-hsiang-ling pass.

I had now been along nearly the whole of the Chien-ch'ang valley and a little later, on my road to Mien-ning Hsien, I was able to see the rest of it, so I will summarise here my observations on it.

The plain stretches from a little beyond Mien-ning Hsien in the north down to the village of Hsin-kai-tzŭ in the south. It is, therefore, about 110 miles in length, but has not an average width of more than two miles. Its elevation at Mien-ning is 6,250 feet, and from this it slopes down by a scarcely perceptible descent to some 4,200 feet in the south.

Besides the two official cities of Ning-yuan Fu and

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000 on the next day, the 23rd February, our road led up a very stony, little-cultivated valley hedged in by steep hills on
712 each side. Every mile or so along this road are little forts as a protection to travellers from Lo-lo raids, but they only have garrisons of two or three men each, and no one seems to anticipate any danger.

• 703 In one of these forts I saw some more regulations written up after the manner of those of the T'ung-an-chou army. They were as follows:—

If when ordered out to fight, any soldier says he is afraid to go—To be beheaded.

If a soldier gets too old to fight—To be discharged.

For smoking opium—To be discharged.

I have little doubt that nine-tenths of both officers and men are confirmed opium smokers.

361 Passing the little town of Mien-shan about halfway, we
342 reached Têng-hsiang-ying in the afternoon. This is a fortified village of some 150 houses, and is the head-quarters of the major who commands all the troops in the Hsiao-hsiang-ling pass. It is built just where the narrow valley gets still narrower, and is at a height of 7,850 feet, 2,200 feet above Lu-ku, though the rise is so gradual as to be hardly noticeable. The roofs of the houses here are made of planks kept in their places by large stones placed on top of them. This is a style of roof I found not uncommon in parts of western Ssŭ-ch'uan.

000 On the 24th February we crossed the Hsiao-hsiang-ling pass. The top I made exactly 10,000 feet. There were only a few patches of snow in shady places, but the last three or four days had been sunny; no doubt in cloudy weather the whole top of the pass would be in snow at this time of year. The ascent from the south is very gradual. In fact it is, without exception, the easiest road up a high range that I have ever seen in western China. The descent on the northern side is however steep, the road falling at the rate of 1000 feet in a mile.

The top of the pass is in a saddle, so Lachman Jadu and I climbed up a hill 1000 feet higher and got a fairly good view of the country round. To the east is a mass of high and steep ranges inhabited by the Independent Lo-los.